

NEWS

FROM THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER
PAUL KORETZ
FIFTH DISTRICT



For Immediate Release

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Los Angeles Becomes First MegaCity to Adopt Nation-Leading Citywide Carbon Neutrality Goal (Without Offsets) by 2030 *Via Innovative \$1M “Cool City Challenge” Neighborhood-by-Neighborhood Mobilization*

LOS ANGELES, October 19, 2021 -- Today, just ahead of next week’s COP26, Glasgow Global Climate Summit, Councilmembers Paul Koretz (CD5), Mitch O’Farrell, (CD13), Kevin de León (CD14), and Nithya Raman (CD4) led the City Council’s nation-leading effort to aim the City and its resources towards a “moonshot” goal of carbon neutrality without offsets by 2030 via a neighborhood-by-neighborhood mobilization plan to facilitate those goals.

The [approved motion](#) directs the City’s Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO), in partnership with Neighborhood Councils, to drastically increase current carbon neutrality goals to meet climate scientist warnings that 2030 is the deadline by which to avoid irreversible ecological tipping points. The motion asks all sectors of the city to increase their speed to zero, like the City’s groundbreaking 100% renewable energy effort, LA100, which shaved ten years off its original goal of 2045. A “moonshot approach” will be used to find faster and more effective carbon neutrality pathways across transportation, industry, technology, buildings, natural areas, and waste management. All sectors of the city, including LA’s significant creative industries, are intended to be engaged in the effort to create a 2030 Moonshot implementation plan by the end of 2022.

Through the approval of this motion, **Los Angeles joins the cities of Irvine and Petaluma as a finalist city in the innovative new [Cool City Challenge](#) (CCC) initiative.** Developed and funded by the Empowerment Institute, the CCC is a \$1 million grant competition between California cities to develop the most innovative pathways to carbon neutrality and to recruit 200 Cool Block leaders to lead their neighbors through a program to reduce climate emissions and water use in their own neighborhoods, with an eye toward rapid expansion across the cities. Piloted by LA as [Cool Blocks](#) in 2016-2017, the CCC also reduces utility bills while building local emergency preparedness against the climate disasters such as floods, wildfires and extreme storm events that are already worsening considerable worldwide. The CCC will create bottom-up change from the demand side (consumers) and connect it to top-down change from the supply-side (business, technology, and policy adoption). The resultant community synergy can empower social, environmental, and economic outcomes not previously imagined possible.

“There’s no doubt carbon neutrality by 2030 is an aspirational stretch goal,” **said Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz**, who co-authored the motion. “But if we are to rise up to meet the greatest challenge ever faced by humankind -- in time -- we must look climate change square in the face, mobilize LA with equity and justice, neighborhood by neighborhood, sector by sector, and do not what’s possible, but what’s necessary to keep our planet habitable and thriving. If that means making the impossible possible and the aspirational operational, so be it.”

Earlier this year via Council action, the Department of Water and Power completed the groundbreaking “LA100 Study” with pathways to reach 100% renewable energy by 2035 -- ten years earlier than planned, which will achieve 80% renewable and 97% carbon free energy by 2030. The 2030 motion seeks to emulate the utility’s goal acceleration through citywide partnerships including UCLA climate experts among other esteemed institutions.

"The City is moving quickly to reach its zero carbon goals," said **Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell**, the chair of the Energy, Climate Change, Environmental Justice, and Los Angeles River committee. "Thanks to the landmark LA100 study approved by the City Council earlier this year, by 2035 the City will use 100% clean energy with no fossil fuels. This particular initiative will assist that goal by mobilizing thousands of Angelenos as local leaders in their neighborhoods. We are all in this together, block by block."

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“By accepting the ambitious Cool Cities Challenge, Los Angeles is not just talking the talk, but walking the walk on achieving carbon neutral by 2030,” said co-author **Councilmember Nithya Raman**. “We are actively empowering and galvanizing the community to help us get there.”

“The CCC will help CEMO prioritize an equitable, inclusive mobilization throughout the city to ensure we build the social cohesion and infrastructure to prepare LA for climate emergencies that are worsening and creating more climate disruption,” said **Marta Segura, Director of the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office**. “Carbon neutrality by 2030 without offsets is key to minimizing the climate chaos that is unfolding not only in LA, but around the world.”

“At this point in the climate crisis, all of us at every level—from individual households to the international level—need to make big changes quickly, so we’re excited to leverage the power of neighborhood councils and neighborhoods to help the city of Los Angeles reach carbon neutrality by 2030,” said **Lisa Hart, Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance board member**. “Our safe future depends upon our setting and then achieving such audacious goals.”

“UCLA’s Sustainable LA Grand Challenge is excited to partner with the City to apply the latest research to co-design strategies to accelerate the path to carbon neutrality by 2030,” said **Cassie Rauser, Ph.D. Executive Director, UCLA Sustainable LA Grand Challenge**, “while simultaneously working to achieve the University of California’s own carbon neutrality goal by 2025.”

Those who would like to become Cool Block leaders can sign up for an information session at https://www.ncsa.la/cool_blocks_la

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